



January 25, 2018

RE: Senate Bill 272 – Concerning passing on streets and highways; relating to waste collectors

Chairman Petersen and members of the Transportation Committee:

My name is Rick Grochowski, Safety Director for Waste Management. Thank you for the opportunity to speak before this committee in support of Senate Bill 272.

Safety for our company is a core value and an issue that I personally talk about every day with our drivers. In Kansas, Waste Management has approximately 400 drivers and helpers out on collection routes daily. Based on 2016 data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, solid waste collection is the fifth deadliest job in the U.S. For Waste Management, we know this statistic too well.

Last September, a Waste Management driver was fatally struck by a motorist attempting to go around our stopped collection vehicle. Our collection vehicles operate in residential neighborhoods in the morning when people are rushing to get to work or school. We disrupt traffic flow due to the nature of our business by frequently stopping to service homes and businesses. For the five-state area that I cover for Waste Management, almost 25% of the accidents involving our vehicles is a result of other motorists hitting or side-swiping our stopped vehicle. Our drivers and helpers are required to wear high visibility vests. Our collection vehicles have flashing strobe lights, reflective tape, and Waste Management has painted the rear of every vehicle yellow, all in effort to raise our vehicles visibility. But we need your help.

We are here today to seek your support of Senate Bill 272 and to bring awareness to the public about the importance of slowing down as they approach collection vehicles as this legislation may save someone's life. We want to make sure our drivers and helpers return home to their loved ones at the end of their day.

We ask for your yes vote on Senate Bill 272.

Thank you.

Rick Grochowski
Safety Director
Waste Management of Kansas